

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Prior to entry of this response, Claims 1-19 were pending in the application, of which Claims 1 and 13 are independent. In the Office Action dated February 27, 2006, the specification was objected to, Claims 1, 8, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, and Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Following this response, Claims 1-20 remain in this application, Claim 20 being added by this Amendment. Applicants hereby address the Examiner's rejections in turn.

I. Interview Summary

Applicants thank Examiner Hannon for the courtesy of a telephone interview on July 19, 2006, requested by the undersigned to discuss the rejection of the current claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). During the interview, Applicants asserted that the U.S. Patent No. 5,581,229 ("*Hunt*") at least does not disclose the subject matter claimed in the proposed claims presented during the interview. While the Examiner stated that the amendments were positive and may lead to allowable subject matter, no agreement was made regarding patentability of the claims

II. Objection to the Specification

The specification stands objected to as containing various informalities. The specification has been amended, and Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment overcomes this objection and adds no new matter.

III. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 1, 8, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as their invention. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. To advance these claims to allowance, however, Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter, and Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments overcome this rejection, add no new matter, and do not narrow the claimed subject matter.

IV. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Hunt*. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the cited art for at least the reason that it recites, for example, “the substation circuit configured to simultaneously demodulate signals received from the plurality of different endpoints.” Amended Claim 13 is patentably distinguishable over the cited art for at least the reason that it recites, for example, “wherein demodulating the plurality signals comprises, separating a channel carrying the plurality of signals into sub-channels, and separating each of the sub-channels into sub-sub-channels, each of the sub-sub-channels being assigned to different ones of downstream endpoint transceivers each respectively corresponding to ones of the plurality of endpoints, each of the sub-sub-channels having a predetermined bandwidth.”

In contrast, *Hunt* at least does not disclose the aforementioned elements. For example, *Hunt* merely discloses a generalized receiver 35 that receives signals from transmitters having a type illustrated in *Hunt*'s FIG. 7. (See col. 5, line 58-col. 6, line 6.) Although, the claims of *Hunt* may not be so limited, *Hunt* consequently discloses a separate demodulator used for demodulating signals respectively received from separate endpoints. Furthermore, *Hunt* is silent regarding separating a channel into sub-channels, and then separating each of the sub-channels into sub-sub-channels. Consequently, at least because *Hunt* is silent regarding this type of channel separation, *Hunt* does not disclose each of the sub-sub-channels being assigned to different downstream endpoint transceivers respectively corresponding to the plurality of endpoints with each of the sub-sub-channels having a predetermined bandwidth.

In sum, *Hunt* does not anticipate the claimed invention because *Hunt* at least does not disclose "the substation circuit configured to simultaneously demodulate signals received from the plurality of different endpoints", as recited by Claim 1. Furthermore, *Hunt* does not anticipate the claimed invention because *Hunt* at least does not disclose "wherein demodulating the plurality signals comprises, separating a channel carrying the plurality of signals into sub-channels, and separating each of the sub-channels into sub-sub-channels, each of the sub-sub-channels being assigned to different ones of downstream endpoint transceivers each respectively corresponding to ones of the plurality of endpoints, each of the sub-sub-channels having a predetermined bandwidth", as recited by amended Claim 13. Accordingly, independent Claims 1 and 13 each patentably distinguishes the present invention over the cited art, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of Claims 1 and 13.

Dependent Claims 2-12 and 14-19 are also allowable at least for the reasons described above regarding independent Claims 1 and 13, and by virtue of their respective dependencies upon independent Claims 1 and 13. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of dependent Claims 2-12 and 14-19.

V. New Claim

Claim 20 has been added to more distinctly define and to round out the protection for the invention to which Applicants are entitled. Applicants respectfully submit that this claim is allowable over the cited art and that it adds no new matter.

VI. Conclusion


In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. The preceding arguments are based only on the arguments in the Office Action, and therefore do not address patentable aspects of the invention that were not addressed by the Examiner in the Office Action. The claims may include other elements that are not shown, taught, or suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, the preceding argument in favor of patentability is advanced without prejudice to other bases of patentability. Furthermore, the Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 13-2725.

Respectfully submitted,

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